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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [BF](#) [TK](#) [UK](#)  
SUBJECT: TCI Prime Minister Fights Ouster Attempt

¶1. (U) According to news reports December 16, nine of thirteen elected members of the governing Progressive National Party (PNP) of the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) parliament, including the Deputy Premier, have written to the current governor expressing no-confidence in Premier Michael Misick. The dissident legislators reportedly plan to oust Misick and install two of their ranking members in the territory's leadership. TCI is a dependency of the United Kingdom neighboring The Bahamas, and participates in Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos. Bahamian radio also carried the story December 16.

¶2. (U) News of the call for Misick's ouster came soon after the government avoided a debate on a motion of no confidence by the opposition Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM) scheduled to be read December 15 in the House of Assembly. The motion was submitted several weeks ago, but all business was adjourned on the appointed day. The opposition MPs may have prompted the nine governing party MPs to take action against Premier Misick. One of them attempted to contact the Embassy indirectly December 12, possibly in order to provide advance information.

¶3. (U) Misick has been embroiled in personal and political controversy, perhaps most seriously over a commission of inquiry into allegations of government corruption appointed by the previous governor in July. Media sources alleged that he sexually assaulted his wife and another woman in April 2008; he has announced his separation from his wife, an actress, in August. After several tropical storms hit TCI directly, the UK sent two administrators to provide management of all government funds in the territory, including disbursement of hurricane relief funds, in November.

¶4. (U) The premier gave a televised address in response to the calls for his ouster December 16, admitting "mistakes have been made" in the quest for rapid economic growth. He apologized for any shortcomings in his leadership and discussed his view of the maneuverings in the House of Assembly the previous day, including the support of some governing party members for the planned vote of no-confidence. He called the attempt to replace him as leader both "unconstitutional and unfortunate" and affirmed his loyalty to the people, the party, and his country. He announced a special meeting of the PNP party leadership to consider the process of challenging the party leadership December 17. Misick promised to respect the outcome.

¶5. (U) The TCI governing party may be forced to deal with the no-confidence motion in the next parliament session, when the opposition could publicly question the alleged missteps of the PNP government. Mismanagement, excessive spending and heavy debt load on residents through new taxes will likely feature in no-confidence arguments, as well as corruption being looked into by the ongoing inquiry into government graft.